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LETTER DATED 13 NOVEMBER 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 12 November 1997, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I would appreciate your bringing it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

Letter dated 12 November 1997 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the tenth monthly report on Stabilization Force operations. I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

Appendix

Tenth monthly report to the United Nations Security Council on SFOR operations

SFOR operations

1. Approximately 35,000 troops are currently deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from all the NATO nations and from 20 non-NATO countries. Over the reporting period (21 September-20 October), the number of troops in theatre decreased owing to the return of the reinforcements previously deployed in support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) during the conduct of the municipal elections which took place on 13 and 14 September.

2. Over the reporting period, SFOR continued to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance by means of ground and air patrols. A total of 2,550 sorties were flown by combat aircraft, with the SFOR helicopter fleet flying 99 hours.

3. Support continues to be provided to the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), with SFOR maintaining its regular, coordinated training missions over Eastern Slavonia in order to exercise plans to conduct close air support if necessary.

4. Political unrest continues in the Republika Srpska, and, over the reporting period, tensions have risen with respect to the media there. On 1 October, at the request of the High Representative, and as a result of persistent biased and distorted broadcasting by Pale Serb Radio Television (SRT), in particular the distortion of the press conference with Judge Louise Arbour, SFOR secured the SRT transmitters at Udrigovo and Duga Nijva in Multi-National Division North and at Mount Trebevic and Leotar in Multi-National Division South-East, with the aim of preventing Pale SRT from broadcasting in contravention of the Peace Agreement, and the Sintra Declaration. SFOR's securing of the towers was accomplished without incident. In cooperation with the Banja Luka-based SRT authorities, SRT transmissions were re-established from the Banja Luka SRT studios.

5. On 18 October, in response to unauthorized pro-Pale SRT television transmissions, first monitored late on 16 October, SFOR troops in Multi-National Division North mounted operations to inspect the SRT Veliki Zep tower to determine if it had been the source of the unauthorized transmissions. During the course of the inspection, it was discovered that transmitting and receiving equipment had recently been removed from the tower, rendering it non-operational, and also disabling the south-eastern section of the SRT broadcasting network, including transmissions from Trebevic and Leotar towers. A platoon from Multi-National Division North secured Veliki Zep tower. In conjunction with the Office of the High Representative, work is in hand to restore the south-eastern section of the SRT broadcasting network to normal operation. SFOR forces continue to secure the television towers at Udrigovo, Duga Njiva, Mount Trebevic, Leotar and Veliki Zep.

6. Throughout the Federation, the political and security climate continued to improve. Nevertheless, there were several serious incidents over the reporting period, including a car bomb explosion in Mostar and an explosion which destroyed a mosque in Tomislavgrad. In early October, inflammatory reports were broadcast by Mostar radio, accusing SFOR and the International Police Task Force (IPTF) of mistreating a local Bosnian Croat official and engaging in behaviour likely to result in further violence. OSCE called for a retraction of the broadcasts.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

7. The parties remain generally compliant with most military aspects of the General Framework Agreement for Peace across the whole area of operations, and were highly cooperative during the recent election period.

8. With respect to the police restructuring process, the Federation is fully engaged with the programme initiated by IPTF, and its police forces are now conforming to internationally recognized standards. The target size for the Federation police force is 11,500 - to date, 6,711 policemen have been fully certified and 2,985 temporarily. Five of the 10 Federation cantons have completed the IPTF certification process.

9. Although local police restructuring is progressing more slowly in the Republika Srpska, an agreement was reached between the Republika Srpska authorities and IPTF on 26 September to begin the restructuring process there immediately and setting the size of the Republika Srpska police at 8,500 officers. On 13 October, Ambassador Farrand, the Brcko Supervisor, issued a supervisory order requiring the establishment of a multi-ethnic police force in Brcko by 31 December 1997.

10. While the Republika Srpska local police certification and training programme is encouraging, the Police Anti-Terrorist Brigade, under the command of General Saric, is still not in full compliance with annex IA of the Peace Agreement and with the supplementary instructions to the parties issued by the SFOR Commander on 15 August. This Brigade comprises five units, and currently numbers 954 men in total. The units are located in Pale, Sekovici, Bijelijna, Doboj and Tjentiste, with Brigade headquarters and two weapons-storage sites located in Janja. In addition, there are two training centres at Bratunac and Janja. There are two outstanding issues of non-compliance: first, an overall general failure on the part of each Police Anti-Terrorist Brigade unit to provide monthly duty rosters, and the non-submission of a personnel list by a unit at Bratunac. A further issue which remains unresolved is President Krajisnik's failure to reply personally to the SFOR Commander's letter of 24 September requiring an explanation of the role of the Specialist Police in the Banja Luka events of 8 and 9 September (see S/1997/794, annex, appendix, para. 7). In the light of this non-compliance, the Police Anti-Terrorist Brigade as a whole remains subject to a training and movement ban and continues to be closely monitored by SFOR. SFOR will continue to require all units to comply fully with the relevant instructions before permitting any modification of these present restrictions. In an effort to ensure such compliance, SFOR has established links with each unit and has addressed a letter to the Republika Srpska Minister of the Interior outlining the remaining non-compliance issues.

11. During the reporting period, SFOR inspected 373 military weapons storage sites: 119 Bosniac; 127 Bosnian Croat; and 127 Bosnian Serb. A number of minor discrepancies were discovered, and the following weapons confiscated: from the Bosniacs, 5 rocket-propelled grenades, 1 rifle grenade, 24 hand grenades and 2 x 60 mm mortar rounds; from the Bosnian Croats, 6 long-barrelled weapons, 4 AK 47 rifles, 27 rifle grenades, 100 PMR1 mines, and 83 x 7.62 rounds of ammunition; and from the Bosnian Serbs, 2 lorry-loads of old rifles, pistols and ammunition.

12. SFOR continues to support the IPTF inspections of civilian police stations. Over the reporting period, a total of 236 civil police stations were inspected, 71 of which (36 Federation and 35 Republika Srpska) revealed discrepancies, and the following weapons confiscated: from the Federation, 611 grenades, 3 anti-personnel mines, 1 anti-tank mine, 1,974 long-barrelled weapons and 68 rifles; and from the Republika Srpska, 48 grenades, 8 anti-personnel mines, 1 anti-tank mine, 51 long-barrelled weapons, 16 rifles and 5 pistols. In addition, SFOR confiscated 25 mortar rounds and 271,405 small-arm rounds. In accordance with SFOR policy, after a period of time to allow for appeals, all these confiscated weapons will be destroyed.

13. Over the reporting period, no illegal checkpoints were dismantled. The SFOR/IPTF checkpoint policy has improved freedom of movement over the entire area of operations, and the number of requests for authorization to set up checkpoints has steadily decreased, dropping from 1,049 a week at the beginning of July to 96 requests a week by the end of September.

14. Movements of displaced persons and refugees were affected by the announcement of the municipal election results, with refugees drawn to communities which they view as more hospitable, based on the election results and the degree to which their implementation is proceeding. Much of this movement has taken place across the Inter-Entity Boundary Line, and SFOR is continuing closely to monitor the most affected areas. SFOR is also continuing to work with the Entities on cross-Inter-Entity Boundary Line transportation and, in conjunction with the United States Agency for International Development, has repaired the Tuzla-Brcko railway line in order to enhance freedom of movement.

15. Over the reporting period, SFOR monitored a total of 438 training and movement activities: 119 by the Bosniacs; 46 by the Bosnian Croats; and 273 by the Bosnian Serbs. There are currently two training and movement bans in effect, both in the Multi-National Division South-East - one on the 7th Bosnian Serb Army Corps, and the second on the 820th Bosniac Army Brigade.

16. During the reporting period, Entity personnel, under SFOR supervision, removed 1,818 explosive devices from a total of 325 mined areas: 229 anti-tank mines; 1,539 anti-personnel mines, and 50 items of unexploded ordnance. A ban was placed on the movement and training of the 3rd VRS corps by Multi-National Division North from 22 September to 21 October, with the only exceptions being activities to execute the counter-mine campaign, OSCE arms reductions, and site reductions. A complete training ban which had originally been placed on the 5th VRS corps from 22 September to 21 October was lifted on 10 October because of the corps' full cooperation with SFOR in its demining programme.

17. The agreement reached by the parties at the 19 August Inter-Entity Boundary Line subcommission meeting and reflected in last month's report (S/1997/794, annex, appendix, para. 17) was not ratified, with the result that the exchange of the Republika Srpska village of Dobocani for the Federation village of Koprivna did not take place. Separate meetings with the Federation and Republika Srpska officials have taken place in an attempt to move this issue forward.

Cooperation with international organizations

18. Within its capabilities, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in theatre and support the work of IPTF, as noted above, the Office of the High Representative, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and OSCE.

19. Since the beginning of the political struggle within the Republika Srpska in early July, SFOR has supported the development of an Office of the High Representative and OSCE media initiative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. This has involved direct support for the completion of the successful Free Elections Radio Network (FERN) and the development of the Open Broadcast Network (OBN), with SFOR providing engineering, communications and logistics support. In close liaison with the Office of the High Representative, a policy of opening up the media within Bosnia and Herzegovina has been pursued. This has included SFOR working within the various media advisory working groups such as the Media Experts Commission and the newly created Media Standards Advisory Group. SFOR has also helped staff the Office of the High Representative Media Restructuring Plan and encouraged the technical and financial support that will be required to fund this project.

20. SFOR also continues to work with the Office of the High Representative on the issue of opening up regional airports, notably by ensuring that there are no technical grounds to preclude the opening of the Tuzla, Mostar and Banja Luka airports to civilian traffic.

21. SFOR is fully participating in the OSCE Election Results Implementation Committees, at national and regional levels. These Committees will monitor the installation of elected candidates and will coordinate responses to installation problems. SFOR is also developing a public information campaign in consultation with OSCE, to assist in the election implementation process.

22. With the announcement of Republika Srpska Assembly elections on 23 November, SFOR has begun initial planning for providing logistics and area-security support to OSCE. SFOR also continues to provide personnel to the Joint SFOR/OSCE Elections Operations Centre in preparation for these elections.

23. With respect to arms control, all those parties with weapons still to be reduced reported that they expected to meet the 31 October deadline. Cooperation in the period leading to the end of phase II has been excellent, except for the boycott by the Republika Srpska of the Subregional Consultative Commission meeting in early September. Overall, arms control is progressing in a highly satisfactory manner.

Outlook

24. SFOR has now begun initial planning, in close coordination with OSCE, for the Republika Srpska Assembly elections, scheduled for 23 November. SFOR support will be similar to that provided for the municipal elections, although on a smaller scale, owing to the smaller number of polling stations.